

Draft Phase I Early Restoration Plan



December 2011

MISSISSIPPI ARTIFICIAL REEF HABITAT

GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat project proposes to deploy nearshore artificial reefs in Mississippi Sound. Nearshore artificial reefs provide valuable hardbottom habitat with foraging and shelter sites for various species of larvae and sessile epifauna and infauna (invertebrates and vertebrates). Currently there are 67 existing reefs areas that are each approximately 3 acres in size. At present, approximately half of the existing reef areas have a low profile and consist of crushed concrete or limestone. With the proposed project, approximately 100 acres of crushed limestone would be added to the 201-acre footprint of the existing reef areas.

RESOURCE BENEFITS AND RELATIONSHIP TO INJURY

The Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat project would restore injured shallow-water resources in benthic habitats in the Mississippi Sound, resulting from exposure to oil, dispersant, and/or response activities undertaken to prevent, minimize, or remediate oiling from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

METHODS AND RESULTS OF OFFSETS ESTIMATION

For the purposes of negotiations with BP in accordance with the Framework Agreement, the Trustees used widely accepted methodologies. A method called Resource Equivalency Analysis was used to quantify the restoration benefits estimated to be provided by this project ("Offsets"), resulting in expected production of infaunal and epifaunal biomass at nearshore artificial reefs. Offsets reflect estimated kilograms of biomass produced, and would be applied against secondary productivity injuries in the Mississippi Sound from the Oil Spill as determined by the Trustees' total assessment of injury. A number of factors were considered in estimating biomass production, including, but not limited to, typical productivity in the proposed project area, estimated project life span and the size of the project. Total estimated Offsets for the Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat project are 763,609 Discounted Kilogram (Dkg) Years of infaunal and epifaunal biomass (ash-free-dry-weight) at nearshore artificial reefs in Mississippi.

ESTIMATED COSTS

Total estimated project costs are \$2.6 million.

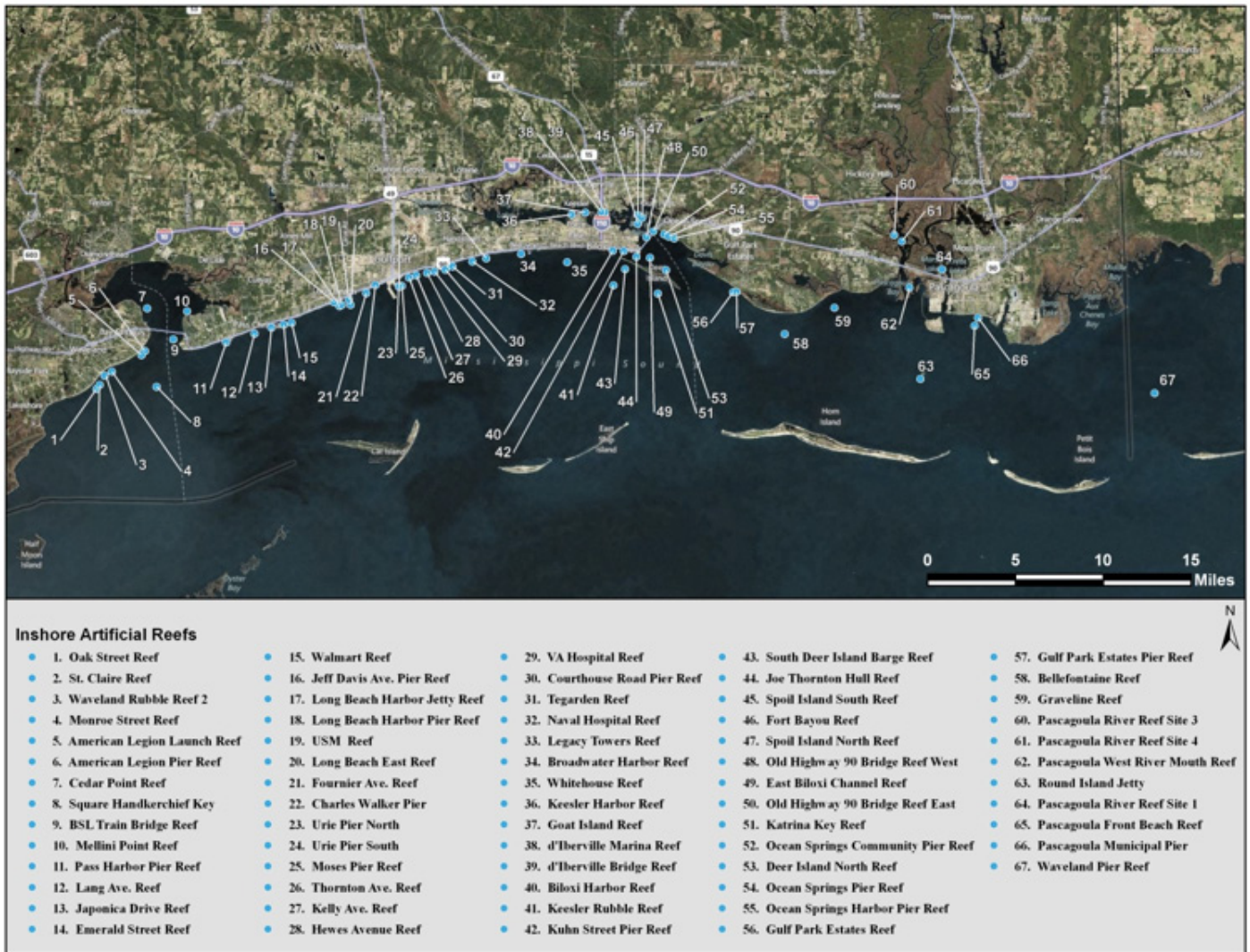
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Richard Harrell, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
email: Richard_Harrell@deq.state.ms.us

Draft Phase I Early Restoration Plan



December 2011



Mississippi's Existing Nearshore Artificial Reefs